

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 (withdrawn): Metal nanoparticles containing a metal component, further containing at least one of P and N and the average particle diameter being from 1 to 100 nm.

2 (withdrawn): The metal nanoparticles according to Claim 1, wherein the metal component is at least one type of transition metal.

3 (withdrawn): The metal nanoparticles according to Claim 1, wherein the metal component is at least one of Cu, Ag, Au, Ni, Pd, and Pt.

4 (withdrawn): The metal nanoparticles according to Claim 1, wherein the metal component is an intermetal compound or alloy composed of two or more metals.

5 (withdrawn): The metal nanoparticles according to Claim 1, wherein the metal component is contained in an amount of 60 to 98 wt%.

6 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing metal nanoparticles by heat treating a starting material containing a metal salt and a fatty acid, in the presence of an amine compound and in an inert gas atmosphere, without use of an organic solvent.

7 (original): The method according to Claim 6, wherein the metal salt is at least one of (1) metal carbonates, (2) fatty acid salts, and (3) metal complexes.

8 (canceled)

9 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing metal nanoparticles by ~~heating treating heat-treating~~ in an inert gas atmosphere a metal complex having a phosphine ligand and a carboxylate ligand, ~~while the metal complex is still a solid wherein the metal complex is a solid at the beginning of said heat treatment.~~

10 (original): The manufacturing method according to Claim 9, wherein the heat treatment temperature is within a temperature range such that weight loss will be from 1 to 50% when said metal complex is subjected to thermogravimetric analysis.

11 (original): The manufacturing method according to Claim 9, wherein the metal complex has no ligands other than a phosphine ligand and a carboxylate ligand.

12 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing metal nanoparticles which comprises a step of heat-treating a mixture containing (1) phosphine and (2) (i) a metal salt of a fatty acid or (ii) a fatty acid and a metal salt in an inert gas atmosphere, ~~while the mixture is still a solid wherein the metal complex is a solid at the beginning of said heat treatment.~~

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13 (withdrawn): The metal nanoparticles according to Claim 2, wherein the metal component is contained in an amount of 60 to 98 wt%.

14. (currently amended) The method according to Claim 6, wherein the amine and the starting material containing the metal salt and fatty acid are ~~heat-treated while still solid~~ at the beginning of heat treatment.